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Definitions of Genocide  
and  
Their Implications for  
Prediction and Prevention

by

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DEFINITIONS OF GENOCIDE  
AND  
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THE HOLOCAUST

The post-war consciousness of the importance of the Holocaust began with the work of a handful of dedicated liberators, jurists, scholars and Holocaust survivors who persisted when hardly anyone else was listening.<sup>1</sup> Among the heirs of their legacy, there are many who are uncomfortable with any attempt to situate the Holocaust in the same category as other cases of genocide.<sup>2</sup> Their reasons deserve our attention and our respect.

Central to their focus on uniqueness is their conviction that the Holocaust is the only authentic case in history of a state attempting to destroy every member of an entire people for purely ideological reasons. Their point is a powerful one and we will return to it below. The Nazi state deliberately labelled the Jewish people as a race of satanic demons who should be destroyed immediately to protect Germany and the "Aryan" nation from racial pollution inevitably followed by extinction. More than a thousand years of anti-Semitic persecution had failed to prepare Jews for this assault. Even veteran anti-Semites found it hard to imagine that Hitler really intended to make the Jewish people disappear. The German bureaucracy under Hitler, as Raul Hilberg notes, did more to undermine the foundations of Jewish life in twelve years than the Catholic Church was capable of in twelve centuries.<sup>3</sup>

To the Nazis' definition of the Jewish people as a biological group to be totally destroyed must be added another element of uniqueness: the position of Germany, the perpetrator of the Holocaust, as one of Europe's most scientifically and industrially advanced countries. That the German state executed the Holocaust in the twentieth century, long after the dawn of the Enlightenment was presumed to have raised Western civilization beyond barbarism, still elicits serious questions about our understanding of Western society and helps to explain the incredulity of Jews and non-Jews alike when first they confronted the evidence of Germany's crime.

A final element of uniqueness must also be recognized. That very same German excellence in science, technology, and administration which fostered disbelief bestowed on Hitler the

tools and techniques he would need to carry out the most elaborate genocide in history: identity cards; registration lists and files; skillful propaganda aimed at lulling Jews into a false sense of security; specialist killing squads coordinated by the apparatus of the state; concentration camps and ghettos; armed anti-Semitic brigades enrolling local policemen and civilian volunteers; death camp gas chambers and crematoria; serial numbers tattooed on camp inmates; sadistic medical experiments and concerted measures to dehumanize Jews; a continent-wide bureaucracy primed to track down and kill every Jewish survivor; and the expertise of every professional group in Germany, including diplomats and lawyers, engineers and physical scientists, medical doctors and biologists, economists and anthropologists, and soldiers and railroaders.<sup>4</sup>

### GENOCIDE

Contemporary interest in the history and sociology of genocide is a direct consequence of the Holocaust. It all began with Raphael Lemkin, a Polish Jew, who gave the Nazis' crime a name--genocide--and, with that name, a history.<sup>5</sup> Like most human endeavors, his definition was not perfect, but it marked a beginning. His concept enabled the world to see the Holocaust as an extreme case in a larger set of mass killings--the coordinated and planned annihilation of a national, religious or racial group by a variety of actions aimed at undermining the foundations essential to the survival of the group as a group. Lemkin badgered and cajoled the delegates to the United Nations into drafting the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. Did he trivialize the Holocaust by subsuming it within a larger class of events? I think not. In the Genocide Convention, he memorialized the victims of the Holocaust by attempting to save the members of future generations from sharing their fate as victims of intentional attempts by a state to destroy an entire human collectivity.

Much has been written about genocide since the passing of Raphael Lemkin. Little has been done to prevent it. The record before us is grim, but this is not the place to review it at length. Scholars who study genocide are motivated by hope and a sense of desperation. Underlying much of the current work in the field is a very fragile premise--that through study we can improve prediction of genocides and that through prediction and education we can mobilize support for humanitarian interventions to deter and prevent new Holocausts. Awareness of the ahistorical optimism of this premise informs, but does not paralyze the work. Inspired by an incongruous combination of humanism and positivism, it goes forward.



## THE IMPORTANCE OF PROTECTING POLITICAL AND SOCIAL GROUPS

When defining a field for research, the needs of social scientists and historians differ from those of international legal authorities. In the case of genocide, the well-known United Nations definition has a number of widely recognized defects.<sup>6</sup> In the work which I have been doing for the past ten years with my friend and colleague, sociologist Kurt Jonassohn, we have found it most useful to use a broad definition of genocide which permits us to analyse many cases of mass killing in so far as they fall within the definition. We see the job of the social scientist as examining the history of mass killings and identifying any underlying patterns that may reveal the processes at work. Clearly, whichever definition of genocide scholars choose will have important implications for the measures we can take to predict and prevent genocides.

One of our major disagreements with the definition of genocide in the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of Genocide is the exclusion of political and social groups from that definition. Acceptance of the U.N. definition for our research on the history and sociology of genocide implied continuing the traditional silence in the social science literature about the assault on certain victimized social groups of the past. It meant, for example, ignoring the 15 to 20 million Soviet civilians liquidated as "class enemies" and "enemies of the people" between 1920 and 1939. It meant neglecting the roughly 300,000 mentally-retarded and mentally-ill Germans murdered by the Nazis as "life unworthy of life". And it meant overlooking the thousands of homosexuals killed for their sexual orientation by the Nazis.

With these cases in mind, we felt that our research must be based on a definition that included social groups. Within living memory, the governments of the the Soviet Union, Germany and Kampuchea had defined class, mental and physical defects, and sexual preference as primary classifications in their societies. In the hands of rulers who claimed a monopoly on truth and of a bureaucracy which did their bidding, membership in these social categories had proven lethal to millions of human beings. It seemed obvious to us that researchers on genocide must investigate the destruction of such social groups or surrender any hope of explaining the modern world in all its complexity.

Equally problematic for us was the omission of political groups from the UN definition. The killing of some 500,000 Indonesian communists in 1965-66; the murder of members of the Awami League in 1970-71 during the breakaway of Bangladesh; the planned annihilation by the Khmer Rouge from 1975 to 1978

of opposition politicians in Kampuchea--these were only a few of the political groups whose destruction merited study.

As David Hawk has noted, "The absence of 'political groups' from the coverage of the Genocide Convention has unfortunately had the effect of diverting discussion from what to do to deter or remedy a concrete situation of mass killings into a debilitating, confusing debate over the question of whether a situation is 'legally' genocide."<sup>7</sup> Many international human rights activists would agree with him. It was the exclusion of political groups from the definition of genocide in the Convention which led the International Commission of Jurists to rule that neither the killings in Equatorial Guinea under Macias nor Pakistan's murder of members of the Awami League and the educated elite in Bangladesh were genocide.<sup>8</sup> In the case of the Hindu dead, regarded as victims of genocide by the ICJ, Pakistani officials had declared that they were not killed as members of a religious group, but as "enemies of the state."

#### A RESEARCH DEFINITION OF GENOCIDE

Our research on more than 30 cases of genocide stretching from ancient times to the present has convinced us of the need to define the boundaries for research in the field rather broadly. We use the following definition:

Genocide is a form of one-sided mass killing in which a state or other authority intends to destroy a group, as that group and membership in it are defined by the perpetrator.<sup>9</sup>

In addition to incorporating the social and political groups listed above, our definition of genocide emphasizes that the initiative in defining the boundaries and membership of a victim group always lies in the hands of the perpetrator. As the editors of the Wall Street Journal pointed out when the U.S. Senate finally ratified the Genocide Convention in 1986:

. . . like so many of the fine words issued from the U.N., these are worse than toothless. The convention actually manages to exempt every contemporary act of genocide. . . Stalin's men insisted that "political genocide" be struck off the list of outlawed practices. Under the treaty, the Kremlin can send political dissidents to Siberia without having committed genocide. Likewise, Ethiopia's Mengistu can starve and relocate Tigreans and Eritreans, Nicaragua's Ortega can

decimate Miskito Indians, Cambodia's Pol Pot could kill a third of his countrymen, and Uganda's Amin could butcher his opponents. Even where the victims are of one ethnic or religious group, the tormentors can claim that this is merely political genocide.<sup>10</sup>

Since 1985, a consensus has emerged among students of genocide and among the leaders of international human rights groups--a consensus urging protection of social and political groups by the U.N. Convention and supporting further research on attempts to destroy such groups. The roots of the current consensus tap several sources:

- the 1946 report of the U.N.'s Ad Hoc Committee on Genocide which included political groups among the human groups to be protected in the Convention;<sup>11</sup>
- the arguments advanced in 1959 by the Dutch jurist Pieter N. Drost, assailing the exclusion of political and other groups from the U.N. definition of genocide;<sup>12</sup>
- the recommendations of the International Commission of Jurists in 1973 that the definition of genocide be expanded to include political groups;<sup>13</sup>
- the recommendations advanced in 1985 by Benjamin Whitaker, the U.N. rapporteur on genocide, in his Revised and Updated Report on the Question of the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide;<sup>14</sup>
- and, in that same year, the publication of Leo Kuper's arguments on political mass murder in his book, The Prevention of Genocide.

Thus, it is not suprising that in 1986, when the U.S. Senate finally approved the Genocide Treaty 83-to-11, it also voted 93-to-1 to direct the President to try to get a change in the treaty to cover political genocide.

It is increasingly common for investigators to include political and social groups in contemporary research on genocide. It is vital that social and political groups should be incorporated if the debate is not to circulate stagnantly around old fixed arguments. In the years ahead, we want to explore in greater depth the dynamics of genocidal processes and the possibilities of humanitarian intervention.

## ISSUES IN THE DEFINITION OF GENOCIDE

In the course of the past two years, publications and conference papers on genocide have appeared in larger numbers than ever before. Several new issues have been raised by scholars and activists in the field which bear on the prediction and prevention of genocide.

### THE SALIENCE OF THE STATE IN GENOCIDE

At the top of the list, stands the identity of the perpetrator: Is genocide committed when small, relatively isolated aboriginal groups are destroyed by perpetrators acting "as individuals--peasants, ranchers, miners and land speculators--and are permitted by governments that either cannot or will not stop the process."<sup>15</sup> A step in this process is described in a recent news dispatch from Sao Paulo, Brazil:

Fifteen Indians, including six children, were shot dead by white timber exploiters in a remote Amazonian border region, a survivor of the massacre said yesterday. The witness told Reuters news agency by telephone that a group of whites with rifles and sub-machine guns, fatally shot the Indians, from the Takuna tribe, in an attack Monday. The Tukuna are the biggest tribe of Indians in Brazil, numbering about 20,000.<sup>16</sup>

Should cases such as this challenge us to refine our concept of genocide? In a recent paper, Jason Clay of Cultural Survival distinguishes two types of genocide. The first type is "official genocide, carried out by states and directed at groups that, although distinct, had long been part of the society." The second type is "the elimination of small relatively isolated groups on the frontiers of expanding political, social and economic systems." It is the second type, Clay argues, that is far more common in the twentieth century and is exemplified by cases such as the one cited above.

There is more at stake here than at first meets the eye. From its inception as a concept in international law, genocide has been seen mainly as a crime of states. The emphasis on the state as a perpetrator is one of the characteristics which helps to distinguish genocide from culpable homicides committed by individuals. Killings by individuals acting on private motives are covered by the criminal codes of most countries. The United Nations created an international convention against genocide because governments themselves had



attempted to destroy groups of human beings who in many cases were their own citizens.

In cases when governments do nothing to prevent or punish killings that threaten to destroy groups of their own nationals, it is because they condone such killings or give a low priority to the acquisition of the means to stop them.<sup>17</sup> Neglect of these acts of omission is one of the defects of the present U.N. Genocide Convention that Benjamin Whitaker, the Special Rapporteur on Genocide, hopes to remedy. He proposed in 1985 that Article II of the Convention should be amended to add to the list of acts of genocide those "acts of advertent omission [which] may be as culpable as an act of commission."<sup>18</sup>

Efforts to prevent genocide should be directed at states and other authorities. Only governments have the power to stop genocides and to alter the development policies which facilitate and encourage the killing of aboriginal peoples. Certain aspects of the situation in Latin America are reminiscent of the United States in the nineteenth century, when native peoples suffered a drastic decline in their numbers due to the impact of frontier settlement. The behaviour of settlers and government officials bespoke an implicit understanding that it was desirable to reduce the numbers of the native peoples to the level at which they could no longer block "progress". It was this reciprocal relationship between settlers and government officials that Alexander de Tocqueville captured so insightfully in his diary for the year 1831 when he wrote:

One would say that the European is to the other races of men what man in general is to all animated nature. When he cannot bend them to his use or make them indirectly serve his well-being, he destroys them and makes them little by little disappear before him. The Indian races melt away in the presence of European civilization as the snow before the rays of the sun. The efforts they make to struggle against their destiny only accelerate the destructive mark of time. Every ten years, about, the Indian tribes which have been pushed back into the wilderness of the west perceive that they have not gained by recoiling, and that the white race advances even faster than they withdraw. Irritated by the very feeling of powerlessness, or inflamed by some new injustice, they gather together and pour impetuously into the regions which they

formerly inhabited and where now rise the dwellings of the Europeans, the rustic cabins of the pioneers and further back the first villages. They over-run the country, burn the houses, kill the cattle, lift a few scalps. Civilization then recoils, but it recoils like the wave of the rising tide. The United States take up the cause of the last of their colonists, the American federation declares war on these miserable peoples . . . , a regular army then marches to meet them, not only the territory is reconquered but the whites, pushing the savages before them, destroying their villages and taking their cattle, push the extreme limit of their possessions a hundred leagues farther than they were placed.<sup>19</sup>

Today's government-sanctioned programmes for the development of the Amazon basin and other remote areas of Latin America are re-creating nineteenth century United States' frontier conditions in Brazil, Paraguay and other countries promoting the opening of virgin lands for mining, timbering, ranching and commercial farming in areas inhabited by small hunting and fishing tribes. The Tupi, the Kreen-Akrore, and similar tribes in these once remote areas face the ravages of predatory settlers backed by government reprisals if they resist the destruction of their traditional way of life. And like the first peoples of the United States, their numbers are being drastically reduced by their contact with new microbes and alcohol. It is primarily governments in Latin America who must be held responsible for opening up the interior without developing the means to protect their Indian inhabitants, not the settlers who are pawns in the game. The rulers of these nations are powerful and educated persons who understand the inevitable consequences of their actions. When they tolerate a development process that annihilates native peoples, they are the major perpetrators of genocide. And when governments and the majority of their citizens accept these conditions, it is accurate to speak of their societies as genocidal.

#### INTENTIONALITY AND THE DISTINCTIVENESS OF GENOCIDE

A second important issue in the recent literature, closely related to the first, concerns the distinctiveness of genocide and the importance assigned to intentionality. For several scholars, the line between genocide and its precursors is too blurred to specify and the suggestion that a clear line of divisibility exists is misleading. I argued earlier that a genocidal society exists when a government and its citizens pursue policies which they know will lead to the annihilation

of the aboriginal inhabitants of their country. Intentionality is demonstrated by persistence in such policies whether or not the intent to destroy the aboriginal groups is verbalized.

For Isidor Wallimann and Michael N. Dobkowski, respectively a sociologist and a researcher in religious studies, intentionality itself is increasingly problematic. They argue that:

In a world that historically has moved from domination based primarily on the will of given individuals (in the Middle Ages, for example) to one in which individuals are dominated by anonymous forces such as market mechanisms, bureaucracies, and distant decision making by committees and parliaments, the emphasis on intentionality almost appears anachronistic. . . . [In] the modern age, the issue of intentionality on the societal level is harder to locate because of the anonymous and amorphous structural forces that dictate the character of our world.<sup>20</sup>

The idea that "only intentional or planned massive destruction of human lives should be called genocide," Wallimann and Dobkowski contend, leads to:

the neglect of those processes of destruction which, although massive, are so systematic and systemic, and that therefore appear so "normal" that most individuals involved at some level of the process of destruction may never see the need to make an ethical decision or even reflect upon the consequences of their action.<sup>21</sup>

They would remedy these deficiencies in current research by focusing on new questions such as "Which forms of social organization . . . make it less likely for a massive genocide to occur?"<sup>22</sup>

Dobkowski and Wallimann's tentative questioning of the salience of intentionality is carried a step further by another author who argues against the crucial role of intent in the definition of genocide. Tony Barta is an historian who

studies the impact of colonization on the native peoples of Australia. Barta advocates:

a conception of genocide which embraces relations of destruction and removes from the word the emphasis on policy and intention which brought it into being.<sup>23</sup>

The destruction of many peoples, he concludes, was "the result of complex and only obscurely discerned causes, and in that respect genocide should properly lose its uniqueness--the uniqueness of having intentionality as its defining characteristic."<sup>24</sup>

It is but a short jump from the arguments of Dobkowski, Wallimann and Barta to those of Seamus Thompson, a sociologist studying Northern Ireland, for whom genocide is "inherently a continuous variable." In Thompson's view, "The search for a clear dichotomous definition of genocide may be a manifestation of . . . [the] general phenomenon of avoidance."<sup>25</sup> Our definitional attempt to mark the boundary between "genocide" and "not genocide" is intellectually unprofitable, he asserts, because:

It renders impossible a research finding that incremental steps, involving much normal behavior, and quite conceivable deviations from conventional ideals, can move us to genocide. In short, it cuts us off from the possibility of the understanding that we so earnestly claim to seek through it.<sup>26</sup>

Thompson's conviction that there is a genocidal component in the Northern Ireland conflict leads him to analyze events since 1800 as steps toward a future genocide. I am not able to debate whether this will happen in the future, but there is no evidence in past cases that genocide is a continuous variable.

Each of the authors considered in this section, in varying degrees, questions definitions of genocide that emphasize intent and proposes that genocide can take place without anyone consciously willing it. The focus in their essays is on structural violence, systemic conditions, and social and political structures. The underlying foundations of their perspectives appear clearly in their remedies and their proposals for future research on the prediction and prevention of genocide.

For Dobkowski and Wallimann "freedom from structural violence and the anonymous forces that dominate modern man seems to be one pre-condition for overcoming our age of genocide." They

seek "a society that can provide an equal access to power and resources for all with a minimum degree of personal or structural coercion."<sup>27</sup>

Tony Barta is inspired by Karl Marx's attempt "to establish the sets of relationships structuring historical reality as the proper object of historical enquiry, rather than only the intentions and actions of individuals. Pursuing "the objective nature of the relationships

. . . .," <sup>28</sup> he discovers the "key relationship" in the Australian settlers' appropriation of the land. This systemic relationship is "fundamental to the type of society rather than to the type of state

. . . ." Barta conceives of a genocidal society as:

one in which the whole bureaucratic apparatus might officially be directed to protect innocent people but in which a whole race is nevertheless subject to remorseless pressures of destruction inherent in the very nature of society.<sup>29</sup>

He disagrees with Irving Louis Horowitz who, "misleadingly" in his view,

calls Germany "a genocidal society" because during one terrible period of political aberration the "state bureaucratic apparatus" was used for "a structural and systematic destruction of innocent people."<sup>30</sup>

In Barta's configuration, Australian society is genocidal for taking the lives of over 20,000 aborigines, but German society, whose victims number in the millions, is not. Barta makes no attempt to explain the significance for his analysis of Germany's devastation of the Herero people of South West Africa in the years from 1904 to 1907.<sup>31</sup>

Seamus Thompson's view of the genocidal process has led him to undertake two interdependent studies, the first a time-series analysis of political violence in Northern Ireland from 1800 to 1985, the second a cross-societal, strategic comparison of Northern Ireland with England and the United States, and Israel and the Republic of Ireland. In the second case, a crucial question is "Are members of more peaceful societies prepared to endorse the same killings as people in Northern Ireland, but fortunate enough to live in societies whose social and political structures do not present them with this type of decision?"<sup>32</sup>

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The appearance of a group of researchers emphasizing their questions about the role of the state and intentionality as necessary elements in defining genocide marks a departure from earlier work in the field and requires comment. On the positive side, their approach bespeaks a serious concern with the underlying social dynamics of genocide and a refusal to settle for oversimplifying generalization. By calling attention to the impersonal factors in capitalism conducive to genocide, they remind those who emphasize individuals and their existential decisions that larger circumstances and contexts are also important.

These potential gains are won, however, at an enormous cost in the rigour of the analysis. If modern genocide is primarily a matter of social structures and relationships, why does genocide occur in some countries and not in others with the same structures and relationships? To take just one example, why did the native peoples of Canada fare so much better during the invasion by Europeans than the original populations of the United States or of Tasmania?

Another problem of the systemic approach is that it downplays the influence of the individuals who initiate genocides and ignores the capacity of individual intervenors to deter or to halt them. Systemic variables facilitate genocide, but it is people who kill. It is our awareness of the very important role of existential decisions by individuals in genocide which encourages us to invest our energies in predicting and preventing future cases.

The overloading of the impersonal power of societies in Barta's notion of a genocidal society illustrates this problem. His image of a society in which the whole bureaucratic apparatus stands by helplessly while a race is destroyed begs the question. Historians and anthropologists know of cases in which powerful government departments have stymied a weaker department's efforts to save a group from destruction, but we do not know of any cases in which the energetic efforts of an entire government to rescue a group were overcome by the anonymous pressures of society. One of the flaws in Barta's assertion is illuminated by de Tocqueville's observations on the United States in 1831: it was the hand-in-glove pressure of American settlers and the military might deployed by the Government of the United States that destroyed large numbers of the American Indians, not "the very nature of the society."

Knowledge of these nineteenth century American events is so widespread today that no modern government should be immune from condemnation if it fails to vigorously protect its aboriginal peoples. As Canada and other countries have demonstrated, the destruction of capitalism is not an

essential prerequisite for the protection of native peoples. Indeed, Marxist states eschewing capitalism--the Soviet Union, China and Kampuchea--have perpetrated genocides of their own against ethnic groups, political parties, and social classes. Capitalist, socialist and fascist states have all been responsible for genocides. By treating genocide as if it is purely a problem of capitalism, Barta neglects its occurrence in a number of social systems.

Still another, larger set of concerns arises from a consideration of these new definitions of genocide: they confuse genocide with other violations of human rights and other forms of killing. If the spontaneous acts of self-aggrandizing individuals are defined as acts of genocide, this trivializes the responsibility of governments when their acts of commission or of advertent omission threaten the survival of whole peoples; if genocide in the twentieth century is primarily the consequence of impersonal forces and social systems, then there is little that we can do to prevent it; and if perpetrator intent is not crucial to the definition of genocide, then all sorts of unintended lethal consequences of human action would be classified as genocide.

#### THE IMPORTANCE OF IDEOLOGICALLY-MOTIVATED GENOCIDE

Arguments which minimize the importance of the role of the state and of intentionality in genocide also distract our attention from the role of ideologies in the great mass killings of the twentieth century. What Armenians, Ukrainians, Jews, Gypsies, and Khmer know better than any other peoples is the lethal power of a certain set of ideas adopted by a government or party as part of its search for a perfect future. In my view, the Holocaust belongs to that category of genocides deeply rooted in the urge to purify the world through the annihilation of some category of human beings imagined as agents of corruption and incarnations of evil. Hitler's war against the Jews exemplifies the triumph of one of several myths in history by which powerful states have consigned whole categories of innocent human beings to annihilation.

Norman Cohn has written extensively on this subject<sup>33</sup> and Sir Isaiah Berlin recently spoke of it when he talked of the search for a perfect society as a recipe for bloodshed, even if it is demanded by "the sincerest of idealists" and "the purest of heart."<sup>34</sup> Of "the possibility of a final solution--even if we forget the terrible sense that these words acquired in Hitler's day," Berlin warns:

surely no cost would be too high to obtain it: to make mankind just and happy and creative and harmonious forever--what

could be too high a price to pay for that? To make such an omlette, there is surely no limit to the number of eggs that should be broken--that was the faith of Lenin, of Trotsky, of Mao, for all I know, of Pol Pot.<sup>35</sup>

The consequences of past searches for a perfect society and their implication for the future are just as clear for Berlin:

Some armed prophets seek to save mankind, and some only their own race because of its superior attributes, but whichever the motive, the millions slaughtered in wars or revolutions--gas chambers, gulag, genocide, all the monstrosities for which our century will be remembered--are the price men must pay for the felicity of future generations. If your desire to save mankind is serious, you must harden your heart, and not reckon the cost.<sup>36</sup>

#### CONCLUSION

Raphael Lemkin sensed these commonalities when he formulated the concept of genocide. He would have agreed, I think, with the scholars who argue that the uniqueness of the Holocaust inheres in its detailed planning aimed at the destruction of a biologically-defined group and in its implementation using administrative and industrial means by a highly civilized and culturally renowned nation. I believe he would also have insisted on the place of the Holocaust within the category of ideologically-motivated genocides. And with the experience of the great genocides of the post-World War II era--Indonesia, Bangladesh, Burundi, and Kampuchea--it is probable that he would have supported revision of the U.N. Genocide Convention to protect political and social groups.

I have discussed a number of arguments advanced in several recent essays on genocide. The authors of these essays insist that genocide need not be intentional and that it does not require the support of the state. I strongly disagree with their arguments. Let me state my position concisely:

- (1) Killings by individuals are murder, not genocide;
- (2) Genocide is primarily a crime of state and empirically it has not been true that it appears without intent;
- (3) Neither is there any evidence that genocide is a continuous variable; and

- (4) If we include every form of war, massacre, or terrorism under genocide, then what is it that we are studying?

Anticipation and prevention of genocide require a broadly based definition which emphasizes the role of the state, underscores the intent of the perpetrator, and respects the crucial role that ideological motivation plays in modern genocides. The need for pressure on governments who violate human rights and endanger the survival of their aboriginal populations is great, but while attending to these concerns we must never forget that the great genocides of the past have been ideological. As Bertold Brecht reminds us in The Resistible Rise of Arturo Ui,

This was the thing that nearly had us mastered;

Don't yet rejoice in his defeat, you men!

Although the world stood up and stopped the bastard,

The bitch that bore him is in heat again.

# ENDNOTES

1. I would like to acknowledge the helpful comments on this paper provided by Jean Chalk and by my research collaborator, Kurt Jonassohn. The author alone is responsible for the views expressed in this essay.
2. A useful listing of contributions to this literature appears in Alan Rosenberg, "Was the Holocaust Unique?: A Peculiar Question?," in Genocide and the Modern Age: Etiology and Case Studies of Mass Death, ed. Isidor Wallimann and Michael N. Dobkowski (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987), 145-161.
3. Raul Hilberg, The Destruction of the European Jews (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1961), 8.
4. These characteristics are also singled out by Yehuda Bauer in his important essay on "The Place of the Holocaust in Contemporary History," in Studies in Contemporary Jewry, Publication of the Institute of Contemporary Jewry, the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, vol. 1, 1984, ed. Jonathan Frankel, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985), 201-223.
5. The essential elements of his definition are found in Raphael Lemkin, Axis Rule in Occupied Europe: Laws of Occupation, Analysis of Government, and Proposals for Redress, preface and chapter 9 (Washington, D.C.: Carnegie Foundation for International Peace, 1944; reprint, New York: Howard Fertig, 1973).
6. See Pieter Drost, The Crime of State, vol.2, Genocide (Leyden: A. W. Sythoff, 1959); Leo Kuper, Genocide: Its Political Uses in the Twentieth Century (New York: Penguin Books, 1981); and Leo Kuper, The Prevention of Genocide (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).
7. Institute of the International Conference on the Holocaust and Genocide, Internet on the Holocaust and Genocide (Jerusalem), Issue Eight (January 1987), 6.
8. International Commission of Jurists, The Trial of Macias in Equatorial Guinea: The Story of a Dictatorship, Report submitted by Alejandro Artucio (Geneva: International Commission of Jurists, 1978); and International Commission of Jurists, "Bangladesh," The Review (Geneva) 11 (1973):30-33.



9. For earlier versions of this definition and explanations of its terms see Kurt Jonassohn and Frank Chalk, "A Typology of Genocide and Some Implications for the Human Rights Agenda," in Genocide and the Modern Age, ed. Wallimann and Dobkowski (New York: Greenwood Press, 1987), 3-20; Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, "The History and Sociology of Genocidal Killings," in Genocide: A Critical Bibliographic Review, ed. Israel Charny (London: Mansell, forthcoming 1988); and Frank Chalk and Kurt Jonassohn, ed., The History and Sociology of Genocide (forthcoming).
10. Wall Street Journal (New York), 24 February 1986.
11. Political groups were included in the General Assembly's resolution on genocide, passed on December 11, 1946 (96-I), and in Article II of the Ad Hoc Committee's draft convention which stated: "In this Convention genocide means any of the following deliberate acts committed with the intent to destroy a national, racial, religious or political group, on grounds of the national or racial origin, religious belief, or political opinion of its members . . . ." (Emphasis added--F.C.)
12. Pieter N. Drost, The Crime of State, vol. 2, Genocide, 29-30, 60-63, 125.
13. As reported in International Commission of Jurists, The Trial of Macias in Equitorial Genocide, especially 27-35, 44-47.
14. United Nations Economic and Social Council, Commission on Human Rights, Revised and Updated Report on the Question of the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, A report submitted by Benjamin Whitaker (E.CN.4.Sub.2.1985.6: 2 July 1985), 18-19.
15. Jason Clay, Director of Research, Cultural Survival, "Genocide: An Activist's Views of Academic Research," a paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, 29 March-2 April 1988, St. Louis, Missouri.
16. The Gazette (Montreal), 1 April 1988.
17. See the useful discussion of this point in Leo Kuper, Genocide, 37-38. Kuper also summarizes the arguments presented to the U.N. for including acts committed by non-governmental perpetrators under the terms of the Genocide Convention.

18. U.N. Economic and Social Council, Commission on Human Rights, Revised and Updated Report on the Question of the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, 20.
19. George Wilson Pierson, Tocqueville in America (New York: Doubleday, 1959), 123-124.
20. Introduction, Genocide and the Modern Age, ed. Wallimann and Dobkowski, xvi.
21. Ibid.
22. Ibid., xvii.
23. Tony Barta, "Relations of Genocide: Land and Lives in the Colonization of Australia," in Genocide and the Modern Age, ed. Dobkowski and Walliman, 238.
24. Ibid.
25. Seamus Thompson, "Summary Statement," presented at the annual meeting of the International Studies Association, 29 March-2 April 1988, St. Louis, Missouri.
26. Ibid.
27. Introduction, Genocide and the Modern Age, ed. Wallimann and Dobkowski, xvii-xviii.
28. T. Barta, "Relations of Genocide," in Genocide and the Modern Age, ed. Dobkowski and Wallimann, 238-239.
29. Ibid., 239-240.
30. Ibid.
31. On the Hereros, see Jon Bridgman, The Revolt of the Hereros (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981); and Horst Drechsler, "Let Us Die Fighting": The Struggle of the Herero and the Nama against German Imperialism (1884-1915), trans. Bernd Zollner (London: Zed Press, 1980; original German edition, Akademie-Verlag, 1966).
32. S. Thompson, "Summary," International Studies Association paper, 29 March-2 April 1988.
33. See Norman Cohn, The Pursuit of the Millennium, revised and expanded ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1970; original ed. 1957); Warrant for Genocide: The Myth of the Jewish World-Conspiracy and the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, 3rd ed. (Chico, Calif.: Scholars Press, 1981; original ed. 1967); and Europe's Inner Demons: An

Enquiry Inspired by the Great Witch-Hunt (New York: Basic Books, 1975; reprint, New York,: New American Library, Meridian Books, 1977).

34. Sir Isaiah Berlin, "On the Pursuit of the Ideal," The New York Review of Books, 17 March 1988, 11-18.
35. Ibid.
36. Ibid.